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DOCUMENTS AND NARRATIVES
CONCERNING THE
DISCOVERY AND CONQUEST
OF LATIN AMERICA

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5

NARRATIVE OF SOME THINGS
OF
NEW SPAIN
AND OF THE GREAT CITY OF
TEMESTITAN MEXICO

WRITTEN BY
THE ANONYMOUS CONQUEROR
A COMPANION OF
HERNAN CORTES

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH AND ANNOTATED
BY
MARSHALL H. SAVILLE

THE CORTES SOCIETY
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INTRODUCTION

DURING the year 1917 occurs the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of Mexico. Early in February, 1517, Diego Velasquez, Governor of Cuba, sent out three vessels under the command of Hernandez de Cordova to explore the waters to the westward of that island. As pilot of the expedition went Anton Alaminos, who as a youth had accompanied Columbus in 1503 on his fourth voyage of discovery. On this trip Columbus set sail from Santo Domingo, and made the mainland of Central America, along the Honduras coast. While tarrying here for a few days, a great trading canoe arrived from the north laden with people and merchandise, giving Columbus tangible evidence of the existence of a people having a higher culture than that found in the Antilles. This canoe had come from the province of Yucatan, and if Columbus

had but turned his eyes in this direction, to him would have fallen the glory of the discovery of Mexico. Instead, however, he pushed on with his fleet to the east and southeast, against adverse currents and contrary winds, and finally reached Panama. Cordova was undoubtedly influenced by the pilot Alaminos to steer in the direction of the region to which Columbus had turned his back, and on February 8, 1517, he sighted the island of Cozumel, close to the Yucatan coast.

One of the chief sources of information regarding this eventful voyage is furnished us by Bernal Diaz del Castillo, who was not only on this expedition, but went in 1518, with Grijalva, when he was placed in charge of an expedition to continue the discovery of the Mexican coast, which had been skirted by Cordova as far as what is now the city of Vera Cruz. Again in 1519, Bernal Diaz was a member of the larger expedition commanded by Hernan Cortes, under whose intrepid leadership the discovery and conquest of the so-called empire of Monte-

zuma, Mexico, was added to the laurels of the Spanish crown. The complete work of Bernal Diaz relating to these memorable expeditions has only recently been published, and a masterly translation into English with scholarly annotations by Alfred P. Maudslley, has just been printed by the Hakluyt Society in five volumes, the final volume having been issued in 1916.

In the work of Bernal Diaz we have the written account of but one of four eyewitnesses of the Conquest of Mexico. Foremost in importance are the five letters of the conqueror himself, Hernan Cortes. These were sent to the King of Spain, Charles the Fifth, and the second, third, and fourth were soon printed. The first letter sent from the coast of Mexico has been lost, but the information contained in it has been supplied by a letter, apparently containing the same information, sent at the same time to the King, by the just established Municipality of the new town of Vera Cruz. The fifth letter related to an overland journey made

by Cortes from the city of Mexico to Honduras during the years 1526-1527. This letter and the letter of the Municipality, were only found and published during the past century. These five letters have been translated into different languages and published many times, but not until 1908 was an adequate translation in English of all five published collectively, when Francis A. MacNutt issued them with annotations in a two-volume edition.

The accounts of the two other eyewitnesses and participants, in the conquest of Mexico, the Anonymous Conqueror and Andres de Tapia, have never been published in English, and it seems fitting at this time, the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of Mexico, to undertake the publication of translations of these two documents to supplement the letters of Cortes and the history of Bernal Diaz.

The narratives will be published separately, and in the series the Itinerary of Grijalva and other accounts, relating not only to the

discovery and conquest of Mexico, but also of Peru and other Latin-American countries, will be included, giving only such documents and narratives as have not been heretofore published in the English language.

The valuable document relating to the conquest of Mexico by the Anonymous Conqueror, which is here published in English for the first time, has come down to us from the celebrated collection of voyages and travels brought together in Italy, and published in the Italian language by Ramusio. This great collection has not been reprinted in recent times like the great works of Hakluyt and Purchas, and it has never in its entirety been translated into English.

The following notes relating to the different editions of the work of Ramusio are taken from the learned introductory treatise of the great Mexican scholar Joaquin Garcia Icazbalceta, to his translation from the Italian into Spanish of the document which we have now rendered in English from his Spanish translation, and compared with the original

Italian text published by Ramusio. The Spanish translation of this report was published by Icazbalceta in his "Coleccion de Documentos Para La Historia de Mexico," volume I, Mexico, 1858.

Volume I of Ramusio was first printed in 1550, and was reprinted 1554, 1563, 1588, 1606, and 1613. The second volume did not appear until 1559, when Ramusio was already dead. It was reprinted in 1574, 1583, and 1606. The third volume was exclusively devoted to America, and in it is found the report of the Anonymous Conqueror. It was first published in 1556, and was reprinted in 1565 and 1606. Ramusio had brought together material for a fourth volume, and it had already been delivered to the printer, but the establishment was burned in 1557, and with it the manuscript, a few months after the death of Ramusio. The loss of this material is to be lamented, as it probably contained further documents relating to America.

The original Spanish text of the report of

the Anonymous Conqueror is lost; at least its present whereabouts has not yet come to light, and we have to rely upon the Italian text. Much speculation has arisen as to the identity of the writer, and it has been held by some to be the work of Francisco de Terrazas. The evidence has been studied carefully by Icazbalceta, the result being that we are still at a loss as to the authorship of this valuable document. In the publication of Ramusio it is simply ascribed to a "Gentleman of Cortes." It is a matter of deep regret that the author did not write a more extensive account, or if he did, that it should have been lost, for as Icazbalceta remarks, "it is without doubt one of our best historical documents."

There is a translation into French of the Anonymous Conqueror by Ternaux Compans, published by him in his "*Recueil de Pièces relatives à la Conquête du Mexique*," Tome X, of "*Voyages, Relations et Mémoires Originaux pour servir à l'Histoire de la Découverte de l'Amérique*," 1837-1841.

The two illustrations found accompanying the report in the Spanish translation of Icazbalceta are reproduced by him from the text of the edition of Ramusio of 1556, with the remarks that "the drawings are pure caprice, and that of the temple has acquired a certain celebrity that it does not merit."

*Narrative of Some Things of New Spain and
of the Great City of Temestitan,¹ Mexico,
Written by a Companion of Hernan Cortes,
The Anonymous Conqueror.*

CHAPTER I

THE LAND OF NEW SPAIN

THE land of New Spain is similar to Spain, and the hills, valleys, and plains are nearly of the same manner, except that the mountains are more terrible and rugged, in so much so that no one can climb them without infinite labor, and there is a mountain range, which so far as one knows, extends for more than two hundred leagues. There are in this province of New Spain great rivers and springs of very good sweet water, extensive woods on the hills and plains of very high pines, cedars, oaks, and cypresses, besides live oaks and a great variety of mountain trees. In the interior of the province there are very pleasant slopes, and near the coast there are mountains that run from sea to sea.

The distance from one sea to the other is, for the least part, one hundred and fifty leagues, in another one hundred and seventy, in another it exceeds two hundred, and in another it is about five hundred, and higher up² the distance is so great that no one knows the number of leagues, because the Spaniards have not seen it, nor will finish exploring it from now on to a hundred years, and every day new lands are discovered.

In this province are found mines of gold, silver, copper, tin, steel, and iron.³ There are many kinds of fruits similar to those of Spain in appearance, although to taste them they have neither the same perfection of flavor nor of color. It is quite true that many are excellent, and as good as those of Spain could be, but this is not generally the case. The fields are most agreeable, and full of a most beautiful herbage that grows to the [height of the] middle of the leg. The soil is very fertile and abundant, producing everything sown in it, and in many places gives two or even three crops to the year.

CHAPTER II

OF THE ANIMALS

THERE are many animals of different kinds, as tigers, lions, and wolves, and likewise jackals,⁴ which are between a fox and a dog, and others between lion and wolf. The tigers are of the same size as the lions, or perhaps a little larger, except that they are more robust and ferocious; they have the whole body full of white spots, and none of these animals harms the Spaniards, but to the people of the country they show no tenderness, but on the contrary eat them. There are also deer, and wild foxes, fallow deer, hares, and rabbits. The pigs⁵ have the navel in the spine, and there are many other and divers animals, particularly one rather larger than a tom-cat, which has a purse [pouch] in its belly in which it hides its young when it wants to flee with them, because they never leave her, and there she carries them

unseen and unknown, and when it flees, climbs with them into trees.⁶

This province of New Spain is for the greater part thickly peopled. There are great cities and towns, as many on the plains as in the mountains. The houses are of rough stones and mortar, and of earth and adobe, and all have flat roofs.⁷ This refers to the habitations of those who dwell in the interior, but those who live near the sea have the walls of their houses of adobes, earth, and boards, with thatched roofs. The natives of this land have for a long time had the most beautiful mesquites [mosques]⁸ with great towers and living quarters in which they worshipped their idols and sacrificed to them. Many of their cities are better laid out than those here [of Spain,] with very handsome streets and squares where they have their markets.

CHAPTER III

OF THE SOLDIERS

THE people of this land are well made, rather tall than short. They are swarthy as leopards, of good manners and gestures, for the greater part very skillful, robust, and tireless, and at the same time the most moderate men known. They are very warlike and face death with the greatest resolution. For a long time they have had great wars and differences amongst themselves, and all their prisoners of war they either eat or enslave. When they besieged a town and the people surrendered without resistance they were held as vassals by the conquerors, but if they had to use force they were reduced to slavery. They kept a certain discipline in their wars, for they have their captain-generals, and their captains of four hundred men, and other captains of two hundred.⁹ Each company has its ensign, who carries the banner¹⁰ attached to his

back on its staff in such a way that it does not hinder him from fighting, nor interfere with anything he wishes to do; and he carries it so well attached to his body, that unless he is cut to pieces it cannot be untied nor taken away by any means. It is their regular custom to give good pay and rewards to those who serve with valor in the wars, signalizing themselves by some heroic feat of arms, and if one such were among the vilest slaves, they would make him a captain and Lord, and give him vassals, and hold him in such esteem that wherever he goes they pay him the same respect and reverence that they give to their own Lord. He who has so distinguished himself is marked by a special manner of wearing the hair, so that he may be known as a man who has done some great action by everybody at the first glance, for it is not their custom to wear any covering on the head. Every time that he performs some notable action, he is marked in some other similar way, and the great Lords always make him presents.¹¹

CHAPTER IV

OF THEIR OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE ARMS

THE armor which they use in war are certain loose garments like doublets made of quilted cotton, a finger and a half thick, and sometimes two fingers; they are very strong.¹² Over them they wear a doublet and hose all one garment, which are corded behind. This garment is made of thick cloth and is covered with a layer of feathers of different colors, making a fine effect. Some companies of soldiers wear white and crimson, others blue and yellow, and others again of different styles. The Lords wear over everything garments like short jackets, which with us are of chain mail, but theirs are of gold and silver gilt. These feather garments are in proportion to their weapons, for neither arrows nor darts pierce them, but are thrown back without making any wound, and even with

swords it is difficult to penetrate through them. To guard the head they carry things like the heads of serpents, tigers, lions, or wolves, with open jaws, and the head of the man is inside the head of the creature as if it was being devoured. They are of wood covered over with feathers and with jewels of gold and precious stones, which is a wonderful sight.¹³ They use shields of various kinds, made of good thick reeds which grow in that country, interwoven with cotton of double thickness, and they cover them with precious stones and round plates of gold, which makes them so strong that nothing can go through, unless from a good cross-bow. Some arrows it is true pierced them, but could do them no harm. And because some of these shields have been seen in Spain I say they are not of the kind borne in war, but only those used in the festivals and dances which they are accustomed to have.¹⁴

Their weapons of offense are bows and arrows, and darts which they throw with a

machine made of another stick.¹⁵ The tips at the end are of edged stones, or of a strong, sharp fish-bone. Some darts have three tips,¹⁶ making three wounds at a throw, for on one stick they insert three very slender and sharp tips. They have swords of this kind, — of wood made like a two-handed sword, but with the hilt not so long; about three fingers in breadth. The edges are grooved, and in the grooves they insert stone knives, that cut like a Toledo knife.¹⁷ I saw one day an Indian fighting with a mounted man, and the Indian gave the horse of his antagonist such a blow in the breast that he opened it to the entrails, and it fell dead on the spot. And the same day I saw another Indian give another horse a blow in the neck, that stretched it dead at his feet. They use slings which carry very far, and ordinarily carry all these weapons. It is one of the finest things in the world to see them in war in their squadrons, because they move with perfect order, and are splendidly attired, and make such a fine appearance that noth-

ing could be better. Among them are very resolute men who affront death with determination. I saw one of them defending himself most valiantly against two light-horsemen, and another against three or four. The Spaniards seeing that they could not kill him, one of them lost patience, and darted his lance at him, but the Indian, before it reached him, caught it in the air, and with it fought for more than an hour until two foot-soldiers arrived ¹⁸ who wounded him with one or two successful arrows. One of them got in front of him, and the other grabbed him from behind and stabbed him. While they are fighting they sing and dance, and from time to time utter the most frightful whoopings and whistlings in the world, especially when they see that they are gaining the advantage, and it is a certain fact that, to any one who had never seen them fight before, their yells and manly appearance would be intimidating. In war they are the most cruel people possible, because they give quarter to no one, neither brother,

nor relation, nor friend, nor do they allow any prisoners to live, except young and pretty women, killing and eating all others. When they are not able to carry away their booty and the spoils of the enemy they burn it all. They are not permitted to kill Lords,¹⁹ but they made them their prisoners, and carried them off well guarded. Soon afterwards they prepared a festival, in anticipation of which there are in the middle of the squares of the cities certain massive platforms of masonry, about half as high again as a man. One mounts these by steps, and on the top is a place as round as a quoit, and in the middle of this place is fixed a round stone, having a hole in the center.²⁰ The Lord prisoner mounted, and was tied to the stone by the narrow part of the foot with a long thin cord. They gave him one of their swords and a buckler, and soon the same man who took him prisoner came to fight with him. If he again succeeded in the combat he was esteemed a most valiant man, and was given some insignia of feats of arms, and the Lord

in whose service he was gave him other rewards. But if the prisoner conquered him and six others, making in all seven vanquished, he was restored to liberty, and every one who had taken anything from him was compelled to restore it. It happened that the men of the dominion of Huecicingo [Huexotzinco] were fighting with the men of Tula, and the Lord of the latter city put himself so far forward that he could not join his companions, and although he did marvelous feats of arms, his antagonists so charged upon him that they took him and carried him to their city. There they arranged for the customary holidays, making him mount to the stone, and there came to fight him seven of the ablest warriors, whom he killed one after the other, he being fastened to the stone according to usage. Those of Huecicingo seeing this bethought them that if they unloosed a man so valiant and robust he would not stop until he had made an end of them; therefore they resolved to kill him and did so, which act brought upon them the reputa-

tion of being infamous throughout all that country, for they had broken against that Lord the law and general custom, not keeping it with him as with all other Lords.²¹

CHAPTER V

DRESS OF THE MEN

THE dress of this people consisted of several mantles of cotton-like sheets, although not so large, worked with bright patterns and with fringes or borders. Each of the men has two or three of these mantles, and they are worn by tying the ends over the chest. In winter they cover themselves with a kind of shepherd's coat made of a very fine feather that has the appearance of silk ²² or like our felt hats, and they are deep red, black, white, gray, and yellow. They cover their loins front and back with very beautiful towels which are like large handkerchiefs such as we use on the head when traveling; they are of various colors and adorned in different ways with tassels which are placed so that one falls in front and the other behind. They use shoes with only a sole and no upper part, and with the heel piece very much

adorned. From between the toes come out wide thongs which they secure to the instep of the foot with buttons. On the head they do not wear anything except when they go to war or in these festivals and dances. They have their hair long and tied in various styles.

CHAPTER VI

DRESS OF THE WOMEN

THE women use chemises of cotton with sleeves like surplices, long and wide, filled with beautiful work with fringes and trimmings which make a fine appearance. They put on two, three, or four of these chemises, all different, some longer than others so that below they appear like a petticoat. They use also, from the waist down, another kind of garment of pure cotton which goes as far as the ankles, also very splendid and well worked. They wear nothing on the head, not even in the cold countries, but they allow the hair to grow long, which is very beautiful, although generally black or approaching chestnut color, so that with this costume and the long and loose locks which cover the back they look beautiful. In the hot countries near the sea they use veils over the head, of a tawny color, resembling the Spanish *redecillas*.

CHAPTER VII

OF THE THREAD WHICH THEY WORK

THE silk thread with which they work they take from the belly of hares and rabbits, and they dye it the color desired in the matted state. These tints are made with such perfection that one could not ask for better. Afterwards it is spun and with this thread they do beautiful work, almost as fine as our silk. Although they wash it the color is never lost and the cloth lasts a long time.²³

CHAPTER VIII

OF THE FOODS WHICH THEY HAVE AND USE

THE grain with which they make their bread is a kind of pea, and there is white, crimson, black, and reddish. Planted, it produces a high cane like a half pike, which gives two or three ears where the grain is, as in Panizo or Panic grass. In order to make bread they take a great olla which they fill with four or five pitchers full of water, and they put fire beneath it until the water boils. Then they take away the fire, and the grain they call Tayul,²⁴ and over it they add a little lime in order to loosen the thin skin which covers it. In two or three hours when it has become cold they wash it well in the river or in the houses with many waters, so that it comes to be perfectly clean of all the lime, and then they mash it on some stones made for this purpose. When it has been mashed they put water with it and

make a paste, and so grinding it and mashing it at the same time, they make the bread. They put it to cook in large earthen baking pans a little larger than a sieve, and as they cook the bread they eat it, because it is much better hot than cold. They have another method of preparing, which is to make some balls of this mass which they cover with leaves and put it in a great pot with a little water, and cover it well so that with the heat and with keeping them covered they are cooked. They also cook it in fritters [tamales] with other things which they are accustomed to eat. They raise many great hens like peacocks, very good to eat. There are a great number of quail of four or five species and some of these are like partridges. They have also ducks and drakes of many classes, domestic and wild, from whose plumes they make their garments for wars and festival; they use these feathers for many things because they are of various colors, and every year they take them from the birds. There are also great and little parrots which they

have in their houses and whose plumes also are used. They kill for eating a great number of stags and roes, hares and rabbits, which are found in great quantities in these parts. They cultivate a great diversity of plants and garden truck of which they are very fond, and these they eat raw as well as in various cooked dishes. They have one — like a pepper — as a condiment which they call chile and they never eat anything without it. These people live with very little food, as little perhaps as any other people in the world. Only the Lords have a great variety of viands, sauces and vegetable soups, pies and pastries of all the animals which they have, fruits, vegetables, and fish, which are in abundance. They use all of these things, and they are served in plates and soup plates upon mats of palm leaf very beautifully worked which are in all of their houses, as also seats in which they sit, made in various manners but all low, which do not raise them above the ground more than a palm or six inches. The food is brought to

the Lords with a towel of cotton so that they may wipe the hands and the mouth. They are served by two or three chief waiters and the Lords eat all they wish; and then what is left over is divided among other Lords, their vassals, who are there in order to make their court to them.

CHAPTER IX

OF THE DRINKS THAT THEY USE

THEY make various classes of wine, but the beverage which is the most excellent and which they use principally is one which they call Cachanatle [chocolate]. They make it of certain seeds produced by a tree whose fruit is after the manner of a cucumber, and inside are some thick grains like date stones. The tree that produces this fruit is the most delicate of all, and does not grow except in hot lands and strong soils; before they sow it they plant two other trees of thick foliage, and when these approach the height of two men they plant between them this one which produces the said fruit, so that the others, because of its delicate nature, may defend it and keep from it the winds and the sun and cover it. These trees are held in great esteem because the said grains are the principal money that passes in the land and each

one is of the value of half a marchetto of our money.²⁵ Inconvenient as this money must be, it comes after gold and silver and is the one most used by every one in this land.

CHAPTER X

HOW THEY MAKE THE CACAO

THESE seeds which are called almonds or cacao they pound and reduce to powder, and also grind other small seeds and put the powder in certain jars with spouts. Directly they add water and stir with a spoon, and after it has been well beaten they pass it from one vase to another, which froths it, and this froth they collect in another jar kept for the purpose. When they wish to drink it, they froth it with little spoons of gold or silver or of wood, and it is then drunk, but they have to open the mouth wide because it is froth, and must have room for liquefying little by little. This is the most healthful and most nutritious aliment of all known to the world, for one who takes a cup of it, though he may make a long journey, can pass all day without taking another thing, and being cold of its nature, it is better in hot weather than in cold.

CHAPTER XI

OF OTHER KINDS OF WINE WHICH THEY HAVE

THEY have a kind of tree, or rather a plant something between a bush and a thistle, whose leaves are as thick as the leg of a man just above the knee, and about as long as the arm, more or less, according to its age. It throws up a stem in the middle which grows to twice or three times the height of a man approximately, and the thickness of a six-year-old boy. When the time arrives and the plant is ripe, they bore a hole at the foot whence a liquor distils which they keep in vessels of the bark of a tree, made expressly for that purpose. One or two days afterwards they drink it till they fall down from pure drunkenness, and to drink of it excessively and to get intoxicated they consider highly honorable. This tree is most useful, for they get from it wine, vinegar, honey, and arrope.²⁶ They make of it cloth for men

and women, shoes,²⁷ cordage, beams for houses, and shingles for covering them. The ends of the leaves are very hard and pointed, and they are used as needles for sewing, and for making stitches in sword cuts, and other matters. The leaves of this bush or thistle are to them what our vines are to us, and they call the plant maguey. They make still another drink of it, but out of the leaves. These they steep until they can remove the thick cuticle; then they pound the fleshy substance with a wooden tool made for the purpose, and cook this pulp in underground ovens.²⁸ This makes a wine which they drink to drunkenness. Another is called Chicha, and this is made from the grain which they eat,²⁹ and is of different kinds, red and white.

CHAPTER XII

OF THE ORDER OF THE GOVERNMENT

THESE people have a Grand Lord who is like an emperor, and they moreover had and have others like kings, dukes, counts, governors, gentlemen ³⁰ shield-bearers and men-at-arms. The Lords appointed the governors of the provinces, the administrators, and other officials. These Lords are so dreaded and obeyed that they are adored like gods. There was such justice among them that for the least crime or dereliction that any one committed, he was put to death or reduced to slavery. Theft and murder were severely punished, and above all the entrance into another man's land, in order to steal fruits or grain. If any one entered a field and stole three or four ears of maize he became the slave of the owner of the field. If any one was guilty of treason or any other crime against the emperor or king he was condemned to death with all his relatives unto the fourth generation.

CHAPTER XIII

OF THEIR RELIGION, WORSHIP, AND TEMPLES

THEY have very large and beautiful edifices for their idols, where they prayed, offering sacrifices and giving worship. They have priests destined for service of the temples, the same as our bishops, canons, and other dignitaries who serve in them and there live and reside ordinarily; for these temples have fine spacious habitations where all the sons of the Lords are brought up to serve the idols, until they reach the age of marriage. In the meantime they remained in the temple and never left it, nor cut their hair until after leaving it and entering into the marriage state. These mosques or temples had their rents assigned for the necessities and the maintenance of the priests who served in them. The idols they worshipped were figures of the size of a man or even larger, made of paste composed of all

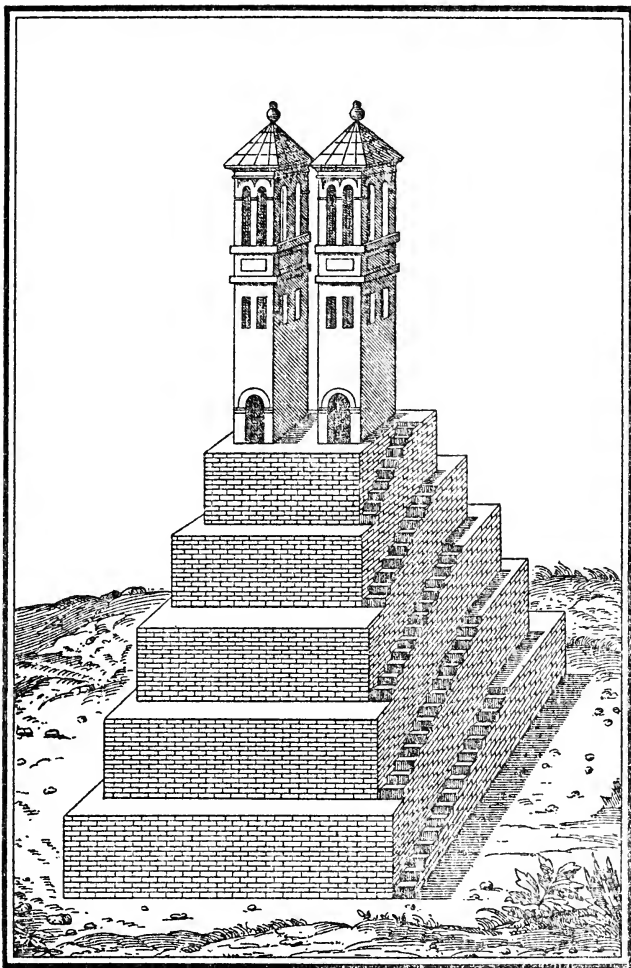
the seeds they know and eat, made with blood from human hearts. Of such material were their idols. They were seated in chairs similar to those of professors in universities, with a sword in one hand and buckler in the other, and the places where they were were towers³¹ of the following style:³²

CHAPTER XIV

WHAT THESE TOWERS WERE LIKE

THEY make a tower, square, of one hundred and fifty paces, more or less, long, and one hundred and fifteen to one hundred and twenty wide. They begin this edifice in a solid mass and, arriving at a height of two men, they leave on three sides a passage about two paces and for one of the long sides they make a stairway until they return to the height of two bodies of a man; and the construction continues all solid of lime and mortar. Here for the three sides they leave a passage of the two paces and for the other they go putting up the stairway; and in this manner it rises so that the steps reach to be one hundred and twenty or one hundred and thirty. They leave on top a little square and in the middle they begin other two towers which reach to the height of ten or twelve bodies with their windows above.

In these high towers are the idols well arranged and well kept, and also all of the place well decorated. Where they keep the principal god no one is permitted to enter, only the high priest, and this principal god has the distinct name according to the province; because in the great City of Mexico he is called Horchilobos [Huitzilopochtli] and in another city which they call Chuennila [Cholula] Quecadquaal [Quetzalcoatl] and also in the others. They always celebrate the festivals of their idols sacrificing many men and women, boys and girls, and when they feel the need of some necessity such as rain, or excess of rain, or when they see danger from their enemy, or suffer from some other calamity, then they make these sacrifices in the following manner. [See plate]



CHAPTER XV

OF THE SACRIFICES

THEY take him who has to be sacrificed, and first they carry him through the streets and squares, very finely adorned, with great festivities and rejoicing. Many a one recounts to him his needs, saying that since he is going where his God is, he can tell him so that he may remedy them. Then he gives him refreshments and other things. In this manner he receives many gifts, as is the case when some one has killed a wolf, and carries the head through the streets. And all the gifts go to those who offer the sacrifice. They lead him to the temple, where they dance and carry on joyously, and the man about to be sacrificed dances and carries on like the rest. At length the man who offers the sacrifice strips him naked, and leads him at once to the stairway of the tower where is the stone idol. Here they stretch

him on his back, tying the hands to the sides and fastening the legs. Then all commence to sing and dance around him, chanting the principal message which he is to bear to the God. Soon comes the sacrificing priest—and this is no small office among them—armed with a stone knife, which cuts like steel, and is as big as one of our large knives. He plunges the knife into the breast, opens it, and tears out the heart hot and palpitating. And this as quickly as one might cross himself. At this point the chief priest of the temple takes it, and anoints the mouth of the principal idol with the blood; then filling his hand with it he flings it towards the sun, or towards some star, if it be night. Then he anoints the mouths of all the other idols of wood and stone, and sprinkles blood on the cornice of the chapel of the principal idol. Afterwards they burn the heart, preserving the ashes as a great relic, and likewise they burn the body of the sacrifice, but these ashes are kept apart from those of the heart in a different vase.

At other times they sacrifice human beings according to some slow ritual lasting hours,³³ roasting the heart, and wrapping the bones of the legs or of the arms in many folds of their paper, and keeping them as valuable relics. But the inhabitants of each province have their own method of sacrifice and idolatry according to their particular deities, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, Serpents, Lions, or other wild animals. They have figures and statues of these in mosques, and in other provinces, particularly that of Panuco, they adore indecent objects in their mosques,³⁴ and openly they have them displayed in sculptures in their squares, in reliefs of the most filthy character (representing the different methods of embracement of a woman by a man).³⁵ In this province of Panuco the men are great sodomites, cowards, and drunkards; it is almost incredible the length to which they carry their passion for intoxicating fluids (when they can no longer stand and drink, they lie down and have it injected by a squirt into their breech).³⁶ It is

notorious that in the figures of their idols they had in view the devil who enters into those idols, and spoke to them, ordering them to sacrifice, and to give human hearts, because they did not eat other things. From this cause came their earnest desire to sacrifice men to them, and to offer them hearts and blood. And also the demon ordered them to do many other things which they did punctually, in conformity with what he told them. These people of all whom God has created are the most devoted to their religion, and observant of it; in so much so that they offered themselves as voluntary sacrifices for the salvation of their souls; also drawing blood from their tongues, their ears, their legs, and their arms to offer it in sacrifice to their idols. There are in the environs and along the roads many hermitages, or oratories, where travelers go to shed their blood and offer it to their idols. Even on the tops of the highest mountains their oratories existed and were held in peculiar veneration.³⁷

CHAPTER XVI

OF THE CITIES OF THIS LAND AND DESCRIPTION OF SOME OF THEM

THERE are great cities here, especially Tascala [Tlaxcala], which in some things resembles Granada, but in others Segovia, although its population is greater than that of either. This Seignory [republic] is governed by various Lords [four], although under certain circumstances they recognize one as the principal, and he was captain-general of the wars. It is a goodly land of plain and mountain, very populous, and produces much grain. Six leagues distant from Tascala on a plain is another city resembling Valladolid, in which I counted one hundred and ninety towers of mosques and houses of Lords.³⁸ This Seignory is governed by twenty-six chiefs; all respect and do reverence to an old man more than one hundred and twenty years of age, and

carry him in a litter. The district is most beautiful, and abounds with fruit trees, principally cherries [wild] and apples,³⁹ and produces much maize. Six leagues from that city is another called Huexotcingo, which is situated at the foot of a mountain, and resembles Burgos. This Seignory is governed by consuls; the district is fair to the eye with most fertile plains and low hills agreeable and productive.

CHAPTER XVII

THE LAKE OF MEXICO

THE city of Temistitan is surrounded by mountains on all sides, except between North and East. Towards the South there are very high mountains, including the volcano Popocatepetl, round as a heap of wheat, and four leagues or a little more in height. In its highest part it has a mouth a quarter of a league in circuit, from which twice a day and sometimes in the night a mighty cloud of smoke bursts out impetuously, and no matter how strong the wind may be does not vanish, but rises to the first region of the heavens, and there mingles with the clouds, ceasing to be plainly visible. This mountain is eleven leagues from Mexico, and about that city are other mountains of great height, some of them ten leagues from Mexico, and others eight. All these mountains are covered with snow for the greater part of the

year, and in the foothills on both sides are most beautiful towns and villages. There are other mountains, but not very high, being between plain and mountain, and both sides of these are covered with thick woods of pines, illexes, and oaks. At the foot of the sierras commences a sweet-water lake which has a shore-line of more than thirty leagues; half of it in the direction of the mountains is very good sweet water: the other half gives birth to a current that runs furiously to the north, and from there it is of salt water.⁴⁰ In the sweet-water lake, there are great growths of tall, beautiful reeds, and many fair villages and small towns, such as Cueta-vaca which is now called Venezuela [Tlahuac], which is large and pleasing; another is called Mezquique [Mixquic], which is larger. Then there is Caloacan [Culuacan], rather smaller than either.⁴¹ Then there is Suchimilco,⁴² which is the largest of them all and remains a little out of the lake and nearer to the shore. There is another Huichilubusaco [Churubusco], and another called Mexicaltzinco

which is between the sweet water and the salt. All these towns were on the sweet-water lake and many of them in the middle. The sweet-water lake is long and narrow, and the salt one is round. In the sweet water there are some small fish; in the salt part they are still smaller.⁴³



CHAPTER XVIII

OF THE GREAT CITY OF TEMISTITAN, MEXICO

THE great city of Temistitan, Mexico, is built on the salt part of the lake, but not exactly in the middle, for it is a quarter of a league from the nearest part [of the city] to the shore. It is in circumference more than two and a half leagues, or perhaps three, more or less. The majority of those who have visited it estimate the population at seventy thousand inhabitants, rather more than less.⁴⁴ Three high causeways built of stone and earth permit entrance [from the mainland] and each of these has a breadth of thirty paces or more. One of them passes over two leagues of water before getting to the city, and the others a league and a half. These two cross the lake and enter the peopled part [outskirts], in the middle of which they come together, so that the two form one.

The other runs from the land towards the city for about a quarter of a league, and by it comes an aqueduct or stream of very good and sweet water from a distance of three-quarters of a league. The flow of the water is thicker than the body of a man, and comes into the center of the city. From it drink all the inhabitants. It springs from the foot of a hill where it forms a great fountain from which they carry it to the city.⁴⁵

CHAPTER XIX

OF THE STREETS

THE great city of Temistitan, Mexico, had and has many fair and broad streets, though among these are two or three pre-eminent. Of the remainder half of each one is of hard earth like a pavement, and the other half is by water, so that they leave in their barks and canoes, which are of wood hollowed out, although some of them are large enough to hold commodiously five persons. The inhabitants go for a stroll some in canoes, and others along the land, and keep up conversations. Besides there are other principal streets entirely of water, and all the travel is by barks and canoes, as I have said, and without these they could neither leave their houses, nor return to them, and all the other towns being on the lake in the sweet water are established in the same way.

CHAPTER XX

OF THE PLAZAS AND MARKET-PLACES

THERE are in the city of Temistitan, Mexico, very large and beautiful plazas where they sell all of the things which the natives use. There was especially the great plaza ⁴⁶ which they call the Tutelula [Tlatelolco], which may be three times the size of the great square of Salamanca. All around it are porticos where every day from twenty to twenty-five thousand people come to buy and sell. But on the market day there are assembled as many as forty or fifty thousand. This plaza has a system of its own, for each class of merchandise has its own place. On one side of the square are those who sell gold [in quills], and on another those who sell [precious] stones of divers classes mounted in gold shapes of various birds and animals. In another part they sell beads and mirrors, in another feathers and tufted crests [of

birds], of all colors to adorn the cloths they wear in war and holidays. Further on they are busy turning stones into knives and swords, which is a marvelous thing to see, and of which we here [in Spain] have no idea, and with them they make swords and bucklers. In one part they sell cloths and garments of various classes for men and in another the habiliments of women. In another place they sell sandals, in another the tanned skins of deer and other animals, and finery for the head made out of hair, which all the Indian women wear.⁴⁷ Here they sell cotton, there the grains which they use for food, further on bread of divers sorts, then pastry, then hens, chickens, and eggs. Near them are hares, rabbits, deer, quail, geese, and ducks. Soon we arrive at a place where they sell wines of various classes, and then we find all sorts of vegetables. In this street they lay out the peppers, in that medicinal roots and herbs, of which the natives know an infinite variety. In another street they have various fruits, and

further on fire-wood for houses, near-by lime, and following it, [building] stones. In fact each thing is by itself and in order. In addition to this plaza there are others, and markets for food in different parts of the city.

CHAPTER XXI

OF THE TEMPLES AND MOSQUES THAT IT HELD

FOR a long time they have had in this great city many grand mosques or temples in which they housed their idols and offered sacrifice to them, but the chief mosque was a most wonderful thing to see, since it was as great as a city. It was surrounded by a high wall of masonry, and had four principal entrances, over each of which was a fortified structure, filled with all kinds of the arms which they used in their wars. The Lord of the great temple was Montezuma himself,⁴⁸ and he had within the walls two thousand men, all selected for their valor, and they guarded his person and accompanied him. When there was any outbreak or rebellion in the city or the environs, they sallied forth, or at least a part of them, and if more people were necessary then the rest joined them, either in the city or its bound-

ary. Before leaving they went to the armories and armed themselves. Shortly after they offered sacrifice to the chief idol, and having been blessed departed for the war. Within the circuit of the great temple there were many habitations of different kinds, and in some a thousand persons could be lodged without annoyance. Within the enclosure more than twenty towers were located, all more or less similar to what has been described, although among the rest, there was one greater, longer, broader, and higher, because it was the lodging of the chief idol, for whom all had the greatest devotion. The deities were in the upper part of the tower [teocalli], and they looked upon them with great devotion. In the lower part were the lodgings and rooms of the priests who served in the temple, but the sacrificers were stationed elsewhere. In the mosques of other cities they sing during the night as if they were chanting matins, and they do this also at many hours of the day, divided into two choirs, one on each side,

and continue according to a ritual, one side intoning hymns, and the other responding ⁴⁹ as if they were singing vespers. Within the mosque where that is done, there are fountains and washing places for the service.⁵⁰

CHAPTER XXII

OF THE HABITATIONS

THERE were, and still are in this city, very good and handsome houses of the Lords, so large, and with so many halls, sitting-rooms, and lodgings with gardens above⁵¹ and below, that it was a marvelous thing to see. I entered more than four times the house of the chief Lord⁵² without any other purpose than to see things, and I walked till I was tired, and never saw the whole of it. It was the custom to place at the entrance of all the houses of the Lords very large halls and sitting-rooms around a great patio, and there was one so great that it could contain more than three thousand persons. On the terraced roof above, it having the same extension, thirty mounted men could have ridden cañas⁵³ as comfortably as on a plaza.

This great city of Temistitan is a little longer than its width,⁵⁴ and in the middle of it

where the great mosque used to be, and the palace of the Lord Montezuma,⁵⁵ the Spaniards built their citadel, and established their quarters, and it is as well arranged, and has as many handsome squares and streets, as any city in the world. The streets are wide and long, and lined by beautiful houses of cement and brick, all of the same height, except a few, which have towers, and this uniformity improves their aspect. They number in this ward and in the citadel of the Spaniards more than four hundred good houses, than which no city of Spain has better within such a space, nor even in a greater, and all are strong houses of stone⁵⁶ and mortar. There are two great squares, and the chief one has handsome arcades on all the sides. Here also they have built a fine church. The Franciscan convent is sufficiently beautiful, but that of the Dominicans is as large, as good, and as well made as any in Spain. In this monastery live preaching friars of upright life and great learning. There is a good hospital and other hermitages.

The houses of the Indians remain in the neighborhood of the citadel, or barracks of the Spaniards, and they are surrounded on all sides. In the ward of the Indians⁵⁷ there are more than thirty churches where the natives hear Mass, and are instructed in the things of our holy faith. The people of this city and the suburbs are very skillful with their hands for every kind of thing, and of the greatest ingenuity and industry in the world. There are among them masters of occupations, and to make anything they only need to see it made once or twice. There are no people in the world who hold women in less esteem, for they never tell them what they do, even though they should know that by doing so they would be benefited. They have many women, like the Moors, but one is the principal one and the mistress, and the sons of this one inherit the property of the father.

CHAPTER XXIII

MARRIAGE

THEY take as many women as they can support, like the Moors, although, as has been said, one is the principal one or wife. The sons of this one inherit while the others do not, and formerly they were considered bastards. In the nuptials with the principal woman they have some ceremonies which they were not accustomed to have with the others.

CHAPTER XXIV

OF THE BURIALS

THEY made in the earth an excavation lined by a wall of rough stone and lime, in which they placed the dead seated in a chair. At the side they placed his sword and shield, burying also certain jewels of gold. I helped to take from a sepulcher something like three thousand castellanos.⁵⁸ They placed there also food and drink for some days, and if it was a woman they left at the side the distaff, the spindle, and other instruments of work, saying that where they go they are to be occupied in something and that the food was to sustain them on the road. Many times they burned the dead and interred the ashes.

All of this province of New Spain and of those other provinces eat human flesh, which they have in greater esteem than any other

food, so much so that many times they go to war and place themselves in peril only to kill some one to eat. They are commonly sodomites as I have said, and drink without moderation.

NOTES

NOTES

¹ The name of the capital of Montezuma is spelled in various ways by the early chroniclers. In the account of the Anonymous Conqueror it is Temestitan, and Temistitan. Cortes in his letters writes it Temixtitan. In the manuscript of Bernal Diaz it is usually spelled Tenustitan, while a somewhat later writer, Cervantes de Salazar, gives it as Tenuztitlan in one place, and in another as Tenuchtitlan. Gomara gives this latter form. Today we know it as Tenochtitlan, which is the correct phonetic spelling, conforming also to the representation of the name in the picture writing of the Mexican codices and inscriptions. Its meaning is well known. According to the best modern Mexican authority, Peñafiel, and I quote from the later and more extensive edition of his work on the subject of geographic place names in Mexico, "*Nomenclatura Geografica de Mexico*," 1897, the word may be analyzed as follows: Te-noch-ti-tlan. Tenoch is composed of two particles, Te, represented in picture writing by a rock the Nahuatl name for which is tetl, and noch, represented by a cactus tree growing out of the same, the name for which is nochtli. This cactus is the nopal or tuna very common today in Mexico. By elision of the final tl, we thus have tenoch, expressed by the two objects representing the

name of the division of the Nahuan family bearing the name of Tenocha. There are many variants of the glyph if such it may be called, the most common being the one above referred to. Others show an eagle perched on the branches of the cactus, and again we find it given with an eagle devouring a snake. Peña-fiel considers the *ti*, a ligature, and *tlan*, meaning among, to be understood; hence the sign means among the nopals, or as probably was further expressed by the picture or glyph, the place founded by Tenoch.

² To the north.

³ It is of course understood that the native Mexicans never used either tin or iron, and these mines must have been found by the Spaniards.

⁴ The Coyote or Coyotl. Note by Icazbalceta.

⁵ Peccaries.

⁶ The Tlacuatzin or Tlacuache. Note by Icazbalceta. The Tlacuache is a small animal like an opossum which feeds on fruits. In Oaxaca it is such a pest that when the fruit of a certain tree is ripe night-watchmen are often employed to protect the fruit.

⁷ The valuable description of the Indian houses of Texcoco by Pomar may be used in amplifying this brief notice of the Anonymous Conqueror concerning the dwellings of Tenochtitlan and the Valley of Mexico. Pomar states that the form and construction of these houses is low, with no upper story. Some of them are built of stone and lime; others of stone and simple clay, the most of them of adobe (sun-dried mud). The covering is of beams, and in-

stead of planking there are small strips so well fitted together that none of the earth which forms the top can run through. Most of them enclose a court around which are the rooms which they require; their dormitories and reception rooms for the men in one section, for the women in another, their storage place, kitchens, and corrals. The houses of the principal men and caciques, particularly those of the kings, are very large and massive woodwork. They stand on platforms, the lowest of which is six feet high, and the highest thirty to forty feet in height. The largest rooms are more than one hundred feet long and as many wide. They are square, and in the middle are many wooden pillars at a fixed distance from each other resting on great blocks of stone, and on these the rest of the woodwork is supported. These rooms have no outer doors, only doorways with wooden posts like those inside. The floors were of white stucco or cement.

⁸ The conquerors accustomed to treat with the Arabs of their country, some give the names of Mesquites to the temples of the Indians, although they are commonly called cues. Note by Icazbalceta.

⁹ On the subject of soldiers and the organization of the army the reader should consult the critical essay by the late Adolf F. Bandelier, "On the Art of War and Mode of Warfare of the Ancient Mexicans," published in the Tenth Annual Report of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University, 1877.

¹⁰ The banner referred to is a standard or insignia

but not a flag. They are represented in the Lienzo of Tlaxcala as well as in other codices. On this subject Mrs. Nuttall has published an exhaustive treatise basing her studies on the wonderful example of a standard or insignia now in the Ethnographical in Vienna. The title is, "Standard or Head-Dress? An Historical Essay on a Relic of Ancient Mexico," *Archæological and Ethnological Papers of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University*, Vol. I, No. 1, 1888.

¹¹ To give a man vassals was to make him the feudal Lord of one or more villages. Many writers have denied the existence of the feudal system in Mexico, but it seems probable that it existed though it may not have been hereditary.

¹² This armor was called *ichcaupilli* and was made so strongly that many of the early Spanish soldiers used it as a protection against the darts and swords of the Indians. It is represented in the codices, and in the American Museum of Natural History there is a life-size figure of terra cotta from the Valley of Mexico. It was collected by the translator and described by him in "An Ancient Figure of Terra-Cotta from the Valley of Mexico," in *Bulletin of the A. M. N. H.* Vol. IX, Article XVII, 1897.

¹³ An example of one of these mosaic-covered head-pieces in the form of an animal's head may be seen in the British Museum.

¹⁴ These shields were called *chimalli* and the several examples which have been preserved in Mexico and Europe are probably of the kind referred to by the

Anonymous Conqueror as having been used solely for festivals and dances.

¹⁵ This instrument was known as the *atlatl* and a number still exist in various museums, some of them beautifully carved and still exhibiting gold-leaf covering. These highly decorated spear throwers were probably used in the ceremonies in which the feather mosaic shields were used. There is a survival of the *atlatl* in the spear thrower used by the Tarascan fishermen of Lake Chapala. On this subject of the *atlatl* consult the paper by Mrs. Zelia Nuttall, "The *Atlatl* or Spear Thrower of the Ancient Mexicans." *Archæological and Ethnological of the Peabody Museum, Harvard University*, Vol. I, No. 3, 1891.

¹⁶ Three-tipped darts, probably like those referred to here are used by the Tarascan fisherman above mentioned, for use with the *atlatl*.

¹⁷ This saw sword is the *maquahuítl*. No specimens of this weapon have come down to us, but numerous representations are found in the codices.

¹⁸ Probably Indian allies of the Spaniards.

¹⁹ This refers to those who held fiefs.

²⁰ In several of the codices we find representations of this gladiatorial combat and full descriptions are given by a number of the early Spanish chroniclers.

²¹ Pomar in his narrative of the city of Texcoco, Ms. relates with some variations the ceremonies of this extraordinary sacrifice which the Spaniards called gladiatorial. Although he reduces to four the number of those who contended against the prisoner he

states that no one was ever so valiant as to escape from the four. Note by Icazbalceta.

²² Fabric of silk or cloth dyed a very bright purple. Note by Icazbalceta.

²³ The Anonymous Conqueror was deceived in regard to this matter, for the Mexican silk was made from the Mexican ramie, which is identical with "China grass." It was a trade secret, and the merchant caste kept it as long as they could. Ramie is the fiber of a tall nettle.

²⁴ Tlaolli or Tlaoyalli, that is to say maize. Note by Icazbalceta. Probably tamales.

²⁵ A small piece of copper money with the effigy of San Marcos, which is worth about two sous of a franc. Note by Ternaux. In the Mexican codices a bag which contained 8000 grains of cacao represented the number 8000.

²⁶ A kind of sweetmeat made by boiling the fresh liquor.

²⁷ The Mexicans never wore shoes, a two-toe-strap sandal was the universal foot-gear when such article of clothing was worn.

²⁸ This is tequila, a hot intoxicating liquor, colorless and of a smoky taste, distilled from the maguey. It is also called mescal.

²⁹ Maize.

³⁰ The Italian word is cavalieri.

³¹ These towers were the well-known teocallis, of which a good example may still be seen in Teayo, Vera Cruz.

³² See the plate. No other illustration of this style or type of *teocalli* is known to the translator.

³³ We are ignorant of the signification of the adverbial expression *per punti and hora*: Ternaux translates *sans preliminaire*, it might be interpreted *á horas fijas*. Note by Icazbalceta.

³⁴ *Teocallis* or towers.

³⁵ This paragraph is not translated into Spanish by Icazbalceta.

³⁶ This paragraph is not translated into Spanish by Icazbalceta.

³⁷ Pilgrimages are still made to the *Sacromonte* (now dedicated to the virgin) but there is an avenue of cypresses leading to it, whose trees must be more than a thousand years old. In *Tetzcuco* they say that the remains exist of an old oratory sacred to *Tlaloc*, on the top of the mountain of that name behind *Tetzcutzingo*, a combination of the *Amequeme* chain which terminates in *Popocatepetl*, on whose eastern flank the *Sacromonte* is located. Pilgrims after praying at the shrine climb the mountain as far as they can.

³⁸ This undoubtedly refers to the sacerdotal city of *Cholula*.

³⁹ *Tejocotes*.

⁴⁰ It is difficult to comprehend either the Spanish or Italian, for neither writer seemed to know the geography of the two lakes.

⁴¹ It is at the foot of the Hill of the Star where the fires were lighted every fifty-two years, and a good road runs to *Ixtapalapan*, where salt-works had been

established as far back as the time of the "Toltecs," upon the south shore of the lake of Tetzcuco or Mexico. The fresh-water lake rises from springs in the rocks forming the southeastern end.

⁴² Xochimilco.

⁴³ We are reminded here of a better and much truer description which was given by a Mexican poet who in choice sapphics before the coming of the Spaniards compared the string of lovely small towns along the south and west of the lake of Xochimilco to a line of beautiful girls chattering and laughing and paddling their feet in the water.

⁴⁴ Prescott in his *Conquest of Mexico* questions the statement of the Anonymous Conqueror concerning the population, because all the principal ancient writers, such as Zuazo, Peter Martir, Gomara, and Herrera, agree in giving to the City of Mexico at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards 70,000 families; it is probable that the original Spanish text of the Anonymous Conqueror stated also families, and the Italian translator made a mistake in interpreting *habitori* when he should have written *fuochi*. In this case this document would confirm the usual calculation of 300,000 inhabitants. Note by Icazbalceta. We are inclined to believe that the estimate of the Anonymous Conqueror is a more sane and reasonable one than those of the other early writers who were not eyewitnesses of the conquest, and hence had not the same opportunity of judging of the size of the city as the Anonymous Conqueror.

⁴⁵ The aqueduct ran from Chapultepec to the great boulevard between Tenochtitlan and Mexico and was carried on to the Salto by the Spaniards long afterwards. The Anonymous Conqueror supposed that the two cities were one organization, but they were distinct, and the two aqueducts, on the east from Chapultepec, and on the west (Calzada Veronica) from the spring of the Four Lionesses, in the hills towards Toluca, ending where the American Cemetery is now located, were probably built before the arrival of the Aztecs in the valley of Mexico, even before the Culuas arrived in the valley. The position of Tenochtitlan was strong, but it was necessary to hold the two springs from a possible enemy. If these passed into the hands of invaders the great city was compelled to surrender even to savage foes much their inferiors.

⁴⁶ For a longer and slightly more detailed description of the great Tianguiz or market the reader is referred to the Second Letter of Cortes, MacNutt ed. Vol. I, pp. 257, 259.

⁴⁷ We suspect here some corruption in the text, because the phrase, *conciere de testa fatti di capelli che usano tutte l'indiane*, is unintelligible for me at least. *Conciero* is a word little used in the Italian, as we only find it verified by a single authority (*Cartas del Tasso*) and the meaning is given of *rassetatura*, *conciatura*, that is, composition, finery as the old writers said. With some violence it might be extended to signify head-dress or adornment for the head: but

the following remains to be explained, that is to say, that this adornment was made of hair (*capelli*). Ternaux translates (p. 96) *des corbeilles faites avec des chevaux dont toutes les Indiennes font usage*: the which we do not know how he was able to deduce: and I do not know what variation there might be in the text of the edition of 1606 which was the one he used. I have translated from that of 1556. All of our early writers make long mention of the famous market and of the things sold there, but I do not find in any of them that which would correspond to these head-dresses of the Indian women. It seems to have been the general custom among them to leave the head uncovered. Note by Icazbalceta.

⁴⁸ As Pontifex Maximus.

⁴⁹ Antiphonally.

⁵⁰ This was the case in the temple of Quetzalcoatl at Cholula.

⁵¹ On the terrace roof.

⁵² Montezuma in the Coatepantli.

⁵³ The game of Canes was a sport in which two bands threw their canes at each other to simulate javelins. This sport the Spaniards inherited from the Arabs, by whom it was called *Lab-el-jend*, or cane play.

⁵⁴ It was shaped somewhat like the ace of diamonds.

⁵⁵ Within the Coatepantli.

⁵⁶ *Tetzontli*.

⁵⁷ The faction of *Tlaltelolco*.

⁵⁸ The search for gold in the graves of the ancient

Mexicans was later prosecuted with great vigor by soldiers acting under the orders of Cortes, not only in the vicinity of the former capital of the Aztecs in the Valley of Mexico, but in various parts of southern Mexico, and large quantities of gold objects were taken out and melted up.

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